

Message Text

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62

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 SY-07 OPR-02 M-03 A-01 IO-12 CU-04 AID-20

RSR-01 /158 W

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R 131445 Z MAR 73

FM AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2063

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMCONSUL TANGIER

C O N F I D E N T I A L CASABLANCA 0227

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, MO

SUBJECT: POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY IN CASABLANCA

1. SUMMARY: WIDELY DISCUSSED CLASHES AT MOULAY BOUAZZA AND GOULMIMA, RUMORS OF OTHERS, ARRESTS OF OMAR BENJELLOUN AND OTHER OPPOSITION ACTIVISTS, AND PUBLIC AWARENESS OF BOMBS FOUND AT US CONSULATE AND CULTURAL CENTER HAVE CREATED EVEN MORE NERVOUSNESS IN CASABLANCA THAN EXISTED PRIOR THRONE SPEECH MARCH 3. LARGE FOREIGN COMMUNITY IS PARTICULARLY UNEASY. END SUMMARY.

2. DESPITE EXILED OPPOSITIONISTS CLAIMS FROM TRIPOLI AND GOM COMMUNIQUE, OPINIONS DIFFER WHETHER THOSE WHO ATTACKED GOVERNMENT POSTS AT MOULAY BOUAZZA AND GOULMIMA HAD IN FACT ANY CONNECTION WITH LIBYA. MOST HERE BELIEVE INCIDENTS WERE SOMETHING MORE SERIOUS THAN MERE BRIGANDAGE. THERE ARE UNSUPPORTED REPORTS OF ADDITIONAL INCIDENTS IN MIDDLE ATLAS INCLUDING DETONATION OF TWO CRUDE BOMBS AT AIT ISSEHAQ
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(RURAL SETTLEMENT SOUTH OF KHENIFRA) ON THRONE DAY. USUALLY RELIABLE SOURCE REPORTS COORDINATION OF GOM FORCES (ARMY, GENDARMERIE, FORCES AUXILIAIRES) CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT IMMEDIATELY AFTER INCIDENTS CULMINATING IN GENDARMES FIRING ON GOM HELICOPTER IN CONFUSION.

3. ARREST IN CASABLANCA ON MARCH 9 OF UNFP/ RABAT LEADER OMAR BENJELLOUN HAS BEEN FOLLOWED BY ARRESTS HERE OF SEVERAL " RADICAL" STUDENTS AND UNFP ACTIVISTS. UMT AND ALLIED FACTION UNFP HAS SO FAR BEEN LEFT UNTOUCHED BY ARRESTS.

4. NEWS OF BOMBS FOUND NEAR CONSULATE GENERAL AND IN CULTURAL CENTER APPEARED IN ISTIQLALI PRESS (AL- ALAM) AND IS NOW COMMON KNOWLEDGE AROUND CASABLANCA. THEY HAVE CONTRIBUTED SUBSTANTIALLY TO CURRENT CLIMATE OF HEIGHTENED UNCERTAINTY.

5. COMMENT: LATEST EVENTS HAVE ENGENDERED MUCH SPECULATION AND UNCERTAINTY IN CASABLANCA AND HAVE SEVERELY DAMAGED REGIME' S CLAIMS OF POPULARITY AND STABILITY. IN WAKE OF ANNOUNCEMENT ACCELERATED MOROCCANIZATION AND SEVERAL PESSIMISTIC BROADCASTS ON FRANCE- INTER, MOST NERVOUS OF ALL IS FOREIGN COMMUNITY, WHICH IS NOW FULLY CONVINCED THAT THE GOOD LIFE IN MOROCCO IS OVER FOR IT.
NELSON

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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